

post

COMMENTS FROM MARC CRAIG, PRESIDENT
COMMUNITY HOUSING NETWORK

GOOD AFTERNOON,

I AM MARC CRAIG, PRESIDENT OF COMMUNITY HOUSING NETWORK. MY BACKGROUND IS IN HOUSING FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES. I BEGAN IN 1980 BY DEVELOPING GROUP HOMES AND LATER SUPPORTED LIVING ARRANGEMENTS THAT ALLOWED MICHIGAN TO LEAD THE NATION IN MOVING PEOPLE FROM INSTITUTIONS TO THE COMMUNITY. IN DOING SO, I BELIEVE THAT WE MADE A COMMITMENT TO ASSURE THAT PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES WOULD HAVE PLACES TO LIVE THAT WOULD PROMOTE THEIR FULL CITIZENSHIP IN COMMUNITIES ACROSS THE STATE.

FROM THIS PERSPECTIVE, I WOULD FIRST LIKE TO COMMEND MSHDA FOR TARGETING RESOURCES TO PROVIDE HOUSING TO OUR MOST VULNERABLE CITIZENS. IN PARTICULAR, THE SPECIAL NEEDS SET ASIDE ACKNOWLEDGES THE NEED TO HOUSE PEOPLE WHO WOULD OTHERWISE BE IN HOSPITALS, JAILS, OR ON THE STREETS.

I DO, HOWEVER, HAVE SOME CONCERNS ABOUT THE QAP IN ITS CURRENT FORM.

FIRST, I AM CONCERNED WITH LANGUAGE THAT I RECENTLY NOTED IN ADDENDUM IIIA. MY IMPRESSION IS THAT THE PROCEDURES OUTLINED IN THIS ADDENDUM WILL STRONGLY FAVOR PROJECTS WITH 100% OF THE UNITS GOING TOWARD SUPPORTIVE HOUSING. WHILE THERE IS CERTAINLY A NEED FOR MORE SUPPORTIVE HOUSING UNITS, I BELIEVE THAT CREATING CONCENTRATIONS OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AND OTHER VULNERABLE CITIZENS IS A DISSERVICE. RATHER, I BELIEVE THAT INCENTIVES SHOULD BE CREATED FOR PROJECTS THAT PROMOTE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY, AS OPPOSED TO CONCENTRATIONS OF POOR AND DISINFRANCHISED INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES.

SECOND, IT SEEMS THAT THE OVERALL TARGETING AND SCORING IS HEAVILY BIASED TOWARD NEIGHBORHOODS THAT ARE ALREADY LOW INCOME. I AM CONCERNED THAT, WHILE WELL INTENDED, THIS APPROACH MAY ULTIMATELY SERVE TO FURTHER CONCENTRATE POVERTY, THEREBY FURTHER DELAYING ECONOMIC DIVERSITY ACROSS THE REGION.

FINALLY, I URGE MSHDA TO WORK EVEN MORE CLOSELY WITH COMMUNITIES ACROSS THE STATE TO CREATE STRATEGIES THAT WILL BE RESPONSIVE TO THEIR UNIQUE LOCAL CHARACTER AND PLANS. MY ORGANIZATION AND OTHERS IN THE COMMUNITIES THAT WE SERVE STAND READY TO BUILD A STRONGER PARTNERSHIP WITH MSHDA THAT WILL PROMOTE MORE INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES.

THANK YOU